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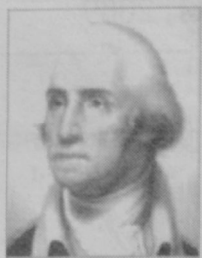
Nota Bene, March 11, 2009

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GW Chapter of National Lawyer's Guild Hosts Drug Policy Forum

BY TIMOTHY FREY
Staff Writer

Last Tuesday, the George Washington chapter of the National Lawyer's Guild invited Professor Eric Sterling to speak at a forum on national drug policy. Professor Sterling is, among other things, a professor of criminology and sociology here at George Washington University, President of The Criminal Justice Policy Foundation, and a member of Law Enforcement Against Prohibition (LEAP). Sterling has a unique perspective on the issue of America's war on drugs as he worked for the Senate Judiciary Committee and helped write the nation's current Sentencing Guidelines.

Sterling spoke to approximately 30-40 students for nearly two hours in LL102, including a half an hour of questions and discussion. Described by NLG co-President Michael Ansell as an "active, lively speaker," Sterling began the evening by introducing himself and describing his experience in drafting the Sentencing

Guidelines. He explained how the guidelines were quickly thrown together following the drug-related deaths of two famous athletes when the nation's drug policy was the politically "hot issue." He then discussed the problems posed by the war on drugs, including bad economics and striking racial discrepancies. Finally, Sterling described the benefits of ending the war, most notably economic incentives and an increased amount of control over its use and distribution.

First Year student and NLG member Dylan Williams proposed the idea of inviting Sterling after having heard another LEAP speaker while an undergraduate student at the University of Hawaii. According to Williams, several of Sterling's points struck a chord, especially those about racial disparities. Williams stated that Sterling "had some really interesting points that I was not aware of, such as the fact that Caucasians are more likely to use

drugs, but African Americans are more likely to be put in jail for drug use," and that "white high school students are ten times more likely to use cocaine." Ansell added that although "one-third of the people charged with drug crimes are African American, they make up two-thirds of the people in prison." According to Ansell, Sterling used this point to elucidate the fact that the racial discrepancies do not end at the courthouse doors.

Williams was also interested in Sterling's comparison of the current war on drugs to the prohibition era, explaining that "another big part of his argument was that right now there's no regulation over who's distributing the drugs, whereas if it was legalized it could be regulated." Ansell, on the other hand, was especially stirred by the economic arguments, stating that "in this time the economic arguments are pretty powerful: billions and billions in added revenue and decreased costs for

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Law School Evacuated Briefly Due to Fuel Spill

BY KATIE EARNEST
Editor-in-Chief

The Law School was briefly evacuated on Saturday March 14th because of a fuel oil spill. According to Tracy Schario, Director of Media Relations at GW, at approximately 8:30pm, someone reported an unusual smell in Lisner Hall to the University Police Department. The D.C. Fire Department evacuated about 60 people were evacuated from Lisner Hall, Stuart Hall, Stockton Hall, and Burns Law Library.

The fire department's trucks and police cruisers cordoning off H street and 21st street while they conducted their investigation. No injuries were reported.

According to Dean Thomas Morrison, Senior Associate Dean for Administrative Affairs, officials discovered a leak in the fuel oil tanks for the emergency generator in the basement of Lisner Hall. The officials evacuated parts of the school as a safety precaution and turned the power off in order to assess the damage.

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1Ls Prep for Moot Court First Year Competition

BY CLARE CAVALIERO
Features Editor

The Moot Court Board First Year Competition will be taking place over the next few weeks. Based on the 1L Spring Problem, the First Year Competition is the first opportunity 1L students have to compete for membership on the Moot Court Board.

The competition consists of both a written component - the appellate brief - and oral argument. The oral argument takes place in three rounds, the first of which will be held in each LRW class. After the Adjunct Professors and Moot Court Board members score the students, those who score high enough will advance to the second round, where they will deliver their oral argument a second time. Again, the best scores advance to the third round. The Moot Court Board

then chooses its members from these third round competitors. The top eight petitioners and top eight respondents will be invited to compete in additional voluntary rounds on Sunday, April 5th. The Board generally accepts ten to fifteen percent of the competitors.

All first-year students will participate in the first round, as it is required by the LRW program and takes place during scheduled class time. Intent to compete forms were due Friday, March 13th, and over 400 students have committed to participating in the second and third rounds if invited. The Moot Court Board is very excited by the number of students who have chosen to participate this year.

First Year Competition Co-Chair Mark Taticchi said the aspect of the

competition he is most excited about is "to be able to give this opportunity to first-year students. One of the things that we as law students are trained to do is to seek to persuade others. This is one of the first major opportunities for students both to hone and to showcase their advocacy skills. For many of our members, there is very little that is more satisfying than getting up, delivering an argument, and feeling like you actually were able to change a judge's mind. Providing that thrill, that sense of accomplishment to so many first-year students is what I am most excited for this year."

Mark offered some words of wisdom for the first-year competitors and said his "best advice is to come to the tip sessions." He explained that at the ses-

sions, "students will hear from some of the best oral advocates GW has to offer. The competitors should (obviously) take the competition seriously but should try to remember to have fun while they're doing it." Tip session dates and times are posted on the portal, but videos from the sessions will be posted for those who cannot attend.

Mark was pleased to say that he had not personally spoken to any 1L who chose not to participate, but students' reasons for deciding against competing vary. Some students hate public speaking or know that oral advocacy is not where their law degree is going to lead them. Although Mark acknowledged that those reasons make sense, he still encourages first-year students to participate because

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NEWS/OPINION

Law School Opens Its Doors to 6th Graders Over Spring Break

By DENISE L. TURNER
Staff Writer

While most students spent this Spring Break working on the journal competition, or sipping exotic drinks in warm places, a few were courageous enough to brave the cold, and over 100 6th graders from Kent Gardens Elementary School on March 4. This was the second year in a row that the law school has hosted elementary school students in an effort to provide a brief lesson in civics.

The effort began last year when Professor Jonathan Turley gave an impassioned speech about the lack of civics being taught in elementary schools. He suggested that elementary schools use the resources of local law schools to fill the major gap in primary school education in the area of civics and basic constitutional concepts. "Kent Gardens then called my bluff and sent over 400 students over three days," said Professor Turley. Last year, over Spring Break, GW Law hosted 2nd, 3rd, and 6th graders from Kent Gardens.

This year, the tradition continued, but only with 6th graders over a period of a couple of hours. The children were first split into two groups; the first were directed down into LL102 for a forensics lesson and the second were given juror stickers then shuffled into the moot courtroom for a mock trial. The event started with Professor Turley giving an overview of the Constitution and the basic rights given to all citizens. When asked what kinds of rights are guaranteed by the Constitution, the answers ranged from highly intelligent to humorous. For instance, one 6th grader said, "You have the right to a jury in a criminal trial," while another added, "You have the right to drive a car when you're 18." The students then listened to a presentation by a GW investigator on forensics and evidence collection, and also got the chance to play jurors in a mock trial. The trial: U.S. v. BB Wolf was a criminal trial based off the children's story of the Three Little Pigs.

Several students, including 1L Bill McGonigle and 2L Joe Pollak participated in the mock trial portion of the event. McGonigle played the role of defense attorney for BB Wolf aka Big Bad Wolf who was played by Joe Pollak for the second year in a row. "The 6th graders came in brimming with enthusiasm and curiosity, which made the trial just as much fun for us as it did for them." McGonigle muses. "I was also surprised with their open-mindedness; the kids were very sympathetic to both big bad wolves and lawyers." Surprisingly, after the heart-breaking and convincing testimony of Curly Pig, played by Denise L. Turner, the first group of kids voted to acquit BB Wolf. The second group however, by a majority vote, convicted the wolf.

During the forensics lesson, the children were given a presentation on evidence collection by one of GW's investigators, Christine Pucillo, and participated in a line-up activity, where they had to identify the correct "thief" who stole the investigator's badge. Chris Healey, a 1L that helped out in the forensics room, was blown away by some of the kids. "Part

of the presentation showed microscopic images of a hair and a fiber and all of our jaws dropped when one student called out that the fiber was nylon, which was absolutely right!" Several students played the "thieves" and played a role in the line up. 2L David Faranda played one of the potential thieves in the line-up activity. "In both classes, significant amounts of kids picked out one of the three who did not in fact steal the badge. I think the forensics lesson in total taught them that every piece of evidence has a certain amount of weight given to it. They learned that an eyewitness' testimony, a shoeprint, or a fiber can take you part of the way to a conviction, but can't make your case a slam dunk."

At the end of each presentation, the presenters, in each of the rooms, Judge Turley and the investigator opened the floor up for questions. Almost all of the children had a question or two. "They relentlessly fired questions at Professor Turley during the Q&A session following the trial. It was one of the hottest benches I've ever seen," recalls McGonigle. Down in the forensics room, the Q&A session was... interesting, to say the least. The Q&A session was equally entertaining. One girl kicked off the session by asking Investigator Pucillo if she had ever seen a dead body. The investigator responded that she had seen one. The little girl then asked, "how did that make you feel?" About 5 questions later, another little girl referencing a TV show her friend likes to watch (forensic files) asked if it was true whether or not you could tell how long someone had been dead by the presence of maggots in the body. 2L David Faranda was stunned by the number of topics and questions the kids raised down in the forensics room. "I was impressed by the depth of the questions the kids had for the law students and professionals," he commented, "we heard questions ranging from the ethics of representing a guilty defendant to the psychological effects of investigating a murder".

Up in the moot courtroom, the questions ranged in topics from law school requirements to the death penalty. One child asked, "Do you [Professor Turley] make a lot of money?" Jokingly, Turley replied, "Yes, I make so much that I sleep on a bed of money." When called out by another young student, Turley confessed

The Pulse Review: Beware of Smoot

By ROBERT ROSE
Special to the Nota Bene

This series features a guest writer from The Pulse Review, "a non-partisan Public Policy, Law, and National Security review with the goal to establish a credible source of information and opinion regarding the latest relevant issues, providing stimulus for intelligent debate." Their website can be found at www.pulsereview.com.

It is ironic that during the times when free trade and open markets are most needed, politicians have a natural tendency to promote protectionism. Nevertheless, when jobs begin to disappear during an economic downturn, people often look for something to blame. Free trade has often served as a scapegoat in these times; however history has shown that we scapegoat free trade at our own peril.

The most common criticism of free trade is that it subjects first-world countries with restrictive labor laws and high wage demands to unfair competition from poorer countries with low wages. As such, American (or German, Australian, Japanese, etc.) workers can't compete because they are unable to produce the same goods for a similarly low price. Companies from these rich countries lay off their expensive workers and move operations overseas. Thus, under this theory, protecting domestic firms would be beneficial during a recession as it would keep more jobs at home.

There is a kernel of truth in this. However, this view's failing is that it only looks at one part of what is happening. For a more complete view of the effects of free trade, one must have a basic understanding of the principle of comparative advantage. Essentially, if each country

puts its resources towards what it is best at producing, the efficiency that results benefits every country involved because more goods will be produced at lower prices. Free trade encourages countries, and more specifically the companies within those countries, to assign their resources more efficiently, thereby benefiting consumer everywhere. As mentioned previously, many poorer countries have cheap labor, and thus their comparative advantage lies in producing labor-intensive goods, such as in manufacturing. The US, then, is bound to lose jobs in those sectors. But, what then occurs is the important part. The US has a comparative advantage in service sector, technology-intensive and education-intensive production. When we put our resources in those sectors, we are able to more than replace those jobs lost to labor-intensive disadvantages, and put our resources into sectors with long-term viability.

A great example of the benefits of opening ourselves to trade and efficiency is in the city of Pittsburgh. Formerly a center of heavy industry, about a quarter century ago it became clear that Pittsburgh could no longer compete with industry in other parts of the country and around the world. Instead of stubbornly

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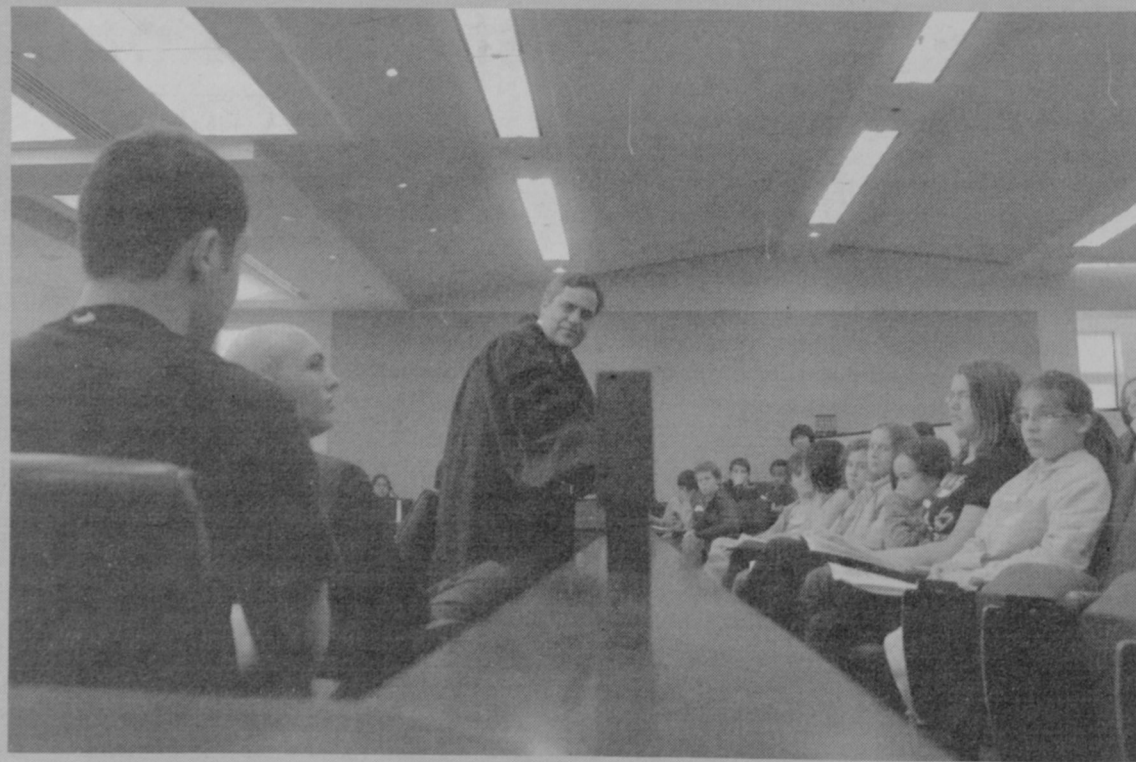


Photo by Claire Duggan

that he does not, in fact, sleep on a bed of money.

At the end of the event, the children and teachers were treated to milk and cookies, and were given the opportunity to talk with the students and Professor Turley. It was obvious that the children thoroughly enjoyed the mock trial and being able to play jurors for a day. During the milk and cookie meet and greet session,

McGonigle received several comments about the trial. "Afterwards, one of the kids came up to provide some comfort for [losing the second trial]. First he told me how he had sided with the Wolf, then he shared some of his beef jerky. My client still went to jail, but the jerky took some of the sting away." Some of the kids even

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OPINIONS

An Open Letter to President Obama

By PATRICK KLOTZ
Special to the Nota Bene

Dear Mr. President,

I oppose research that destroys human embryos, and I oppose federal funding that creates an incentive to do so. I expected that I would disagree strongly with your decision when I heard that you had a statement to make on the issue. What I did not expect, however, was the extent to which your statement would be needlessly offensive. In your campaign you spoke of ending divisiveness. But in your statement on this particularly controversial form of research, it seemed as though you went out of your way to be divisive.

You discussed “restoring scientific integrity.” After the signing, the White House website read, “President Obama lifts restrictions on stem cell research and ensures sound science will no longer fall victim to politics.” One way to be extraordinarily divisive is to be dismissive, which is precisely what you have been in the debate over embryonic stem-cell research. Opponents of research that destroys human embryos have been cast as somehow anti-science, as though this issue simply represents a modern-day Scopes trial. But while science provides us with important information to weigh in our determination whether we ought to go ahead with a particular form of research, the “ought” is only resolved by an ethical inquiry, not a scientific one.

When you spoke of being “called to care for each other and work to ease human suffering,” you raised a legitimate argument – but it was not a scientific one.

Please recognize, Mr. President, that what we have is an ethical disagreement, and end this nonsense about one side being pro-science and the other being anti-science. It is childish, and in your Inaugural Address, you promised to do away with childish things. And I note that you too, Mr. President, are against some scientific research. You stated, “And we will ensure that our government never opens the door to the use of cloning for human reproduction. It is dangerous, profoundly wrong, and has no place in our society, or any society.” When we speak of what research is acceptable, it is a question of where the line is to be drawn – not whether the line exists. So what really makes your proposed limits on science consistent with “restoring scientific integrity,” while President Bush’s were not?

You also stated that “many thoughtful and decent people are conflicted about, or strongly oppose this research. And I understand their concerns, and I believe that we must respect their point of view.” I appreciated such a statement, but did not feel it was honest in light of the rest of your speech. We thoughtful and decent people were not part of the “majority of Americans [who] have come to a consensus that we should pursue this research.” If the opponents of this research truly are as thoughtful and decent as you suggested, then it is appropriate to at least address those concerns. “The perils” of this research, for opponents, are not only in some distant future, down the slippery slope. They are here and now, and need

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Technology Survey Reveals Law School Out of Touch

By RYAN BOWEN
Opinion Columnist

Last Thursday the law school sent out an email asking for feedback on its email service and what students thought about the importance of having computers in school. Some of my professors have told us that there is a growing constituency of GW Law faculty who disapprove of having students use computers in class. They feel that computers are distracting to persons besides the user and take away from the learning environment. It was my impression that the survey that was emailed to students was probably related in part to this anti-computer sentiment among the faculty. While I applaud the school for seeking student feedback on this issue, and I know current members of the SBA have also taken steps to help, I feel that I must voice my concern not only about a potential policy banning laptops from class, but also about the broader state of the school’s perspective on technology.

Laptop use is essential in law school. Unlike in undergrad, professors do not give structured notes or presentations on the blackboard, and the ability to easily organize and rearrange notes, as well as jot things down quickly is incredibly important. I have always been a terrible note-taker, but the advent of Microsoft OneNote has greatly remedied that fault. Were I forced to try to keep up with a professor while writing by hand I would probably resort to my pre-law

school note taking system, which pretty much consisted of paying attention and hoping I remembered it later. This would certainly not help my GPA now.

Additionally, laptops afford students the ability to have all of their course documents on hand all the time in electronic format and to not have to keep track of stacks of papers for different classes. Instead of having four three-ring binders full of papers, I just have different files on my computer where all of my documents are stored. Not only does this result in better organization, it also helps the environment and saves the school printing costs by reducing the need to print out thousands of cases, statutes, and problem sets. As another bonus, laptops allow students to always have all of their notes on hand, which is helpful when notes in one class may end up being useful in another. If an issue from Evidence comes up in Criminal Procedure, I’m not running back to my locker to get my Crim Pro folder: I just switch tabs in OneNote. As a final note, the value of “Ctrl+F” in law school cannot be overstated. If every time I thought to myself “where did I write that down” or “where did they say that in that case” I were forced to flip through countless pages of illegible notes or scan a 20 page case, my sanity would take a serious beating.

The main issue that the faculty seems to have with computers is the perceived distractions that result from

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Still On Our Own in Obama’s Era

By ADAM R. PEARLMAN
Opinions Editor

Americans are starting to realize that what we voted for was merely he who appeared hopeful. “Hope” itself is not a thing that can be given, not really. It is something we must find for ourselves. We can look to those who are hopeful and up-beat for guidance, enlightenment, even empowerment, but cannot rely on them as a substitute for our embracing our own issues, and taking affirmative steps toward climbing out of the predicaments in which we find ourselves. A parent, for example, can encourage, but as any teenager can tell you, or most adults with above-average IQs, encouragement and positive reinforcement by others do not solve people’s individual problems.

For this reason among others, it is hard to say that one can or should be “disappointed” with President Obama at this early stage of his administration. He’s been in office less than two months – he deserves every chance to establish himself. But still, the standards of performance, even right out of the gates, are a bit differ-

ent for anyone who aspires to be the leader of the “free world.”

It is immediately apparent that President Obama’s bright light of rhetorical hopefulness is fading into a mere silhouette in the mist of political normalcy – his lofty verbiage does not always (or even often) reflect his true positions on important issues. But that charge is most often levied against elected officials who do not follow through on campaign promises, not to those who, while in office and ostensibly not campaigning, use smoke and mirrors as their primary means of communicating a supposedly populist agenda. To those paying close attention, it is clear that President Obama’s bark is often bigger than his bite. He and Vice President Biden continue to openly rebuke and chastise the former administration’s policies on several fronts, even in the midst of their own consolidation of executive power. President Obama has issued an

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Don’t Confuse ‘Energy’ With ‘Environment’

By STEFAN CHACON
Opinions Columnist

Readers of the “The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe” are probably familiar with the image of the entire kingdom beginning to thaw as the spell of the evil witch is lifted. Creatures that were frozen begin to come back to life, rivers begin to flow again, the entire realm breaks into spring, and so on. . . . On several occasions I have heard the metaphor invoked to describe what has taken place at government agencies like EPA and Interior since the Obama administration came to power.

Like some cute little critters that had been frozen in silence by the Bush administration’s environmental policy, the true environmentalists from within these agencies have been allowed to breathe again, allowed to address environmental issues by honoring the spirit of our environmental laws. Environmentalists of all stripes, including those in the non-profit sector, science and academia have almost unanimously expressed relief.

As proof of the damage done over

the last few years, one need only look to the trend in the D.C. Circuit toward rejecting agency interpretations of environmental laws, citing the tendency of the Bush administration to force twisted regulations that tortured the environmental statutes in favor of industry, primarily energy. Even the Supreme Court, known best for tossing out progressive Ninth

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The Nota Bene invites readers’ opinions. Letters must be signed, dated and include a graduation year or title. E-mail submissions to notabene@law.gwu.edu

The Nota Bene reserves the right to edit all submissions for space, grammar, clarity and vulgarity.

NEWS/FEATURES

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offered to help with the appeal.

Even though there was little warmth outside, and the only beverages being served were reduced fat milks and mini bottles of water, all the students, law and elementary, had a fun time and learned valuable lessons. The children learned about the Constitution and evidence, and the law students learned that the best form of birth control is spending 3 hours with 10 year olds. On a more serious note, the law students got a unique opportunity to share a small piece of their world with a small group of people who will undoubtedly make a big impact some day.

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praying for government intervention, the city cleaned up its formerly filthy rivers and waterfront, poured money into its universities, and held itself out to financial services, real estate, bio-science and other white collar firms. Today Pittsburgh is defined not by the grittiness of the steel mills, but indeed has improved itself by embracing the market and becoming an upper middle class city.

Contrast Pittsburgh's success against a city such as Detroit, which has stuck to the failing auto industry as a cultural value, and as a result has suffered from a shrinking population, urban decay and economic malaise. There are many more examples of cities and countries benefiting from opening themselves to trade. On a larger scale, one need only look to China and Southern and Eastern Europe to see the how trade has helped fuel economic miracles.

This then brings us back to the politicians making a scapegoat of free trade. Many of those today who are promoting protectionism are the same people who have compared today's economic crisis to the Great Depression. It is ironic that they seem to forget the Great Depression's own disastrous experiment with protectionism, known as the Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act. Passed in 1930 over the strenuous objections of economists (over 1,000 signed a petition warning of its likely effects), it raised the effective tariff rate of foreign imports from 13.5% in 1929 to 19.8% in 1933. Although this might not sound like that significant of an increase, the effect of this act of protectionism was for countries all over the world to retaliate with tariffs of their own against American goods. These retaliatory tariffs caused more than a 60% drop in American exports, effectively killing American industries who sold goods overseas, and thereby contributing to further losses of American jobs. While there were multiple causes to the Great Depression, Smoot-Hawley certainly did not protect American workers. When the bill was passed in 1930, unemployment was 7.8%; by 1933, it reached 25.1%. If there were any doubt as to whether such a debilitating trade war could happen again, Europeans quashed that doubt when they threatened retaliation to the proposed "Buy American" clauses contained in the current Stimulus Bill.

What the US and other countries affected by the global downturn will actually do is as of yet uncertain. The signals from President Obama have been decidedly mixed. In his campaign, he often railed against free trade agreements such as NAFTA, and voted against bilateral trade agreements with two important US allies, Columbia and South Korea. His tone has softened some since then, although he will be under intense pressure from Democrats, especially those

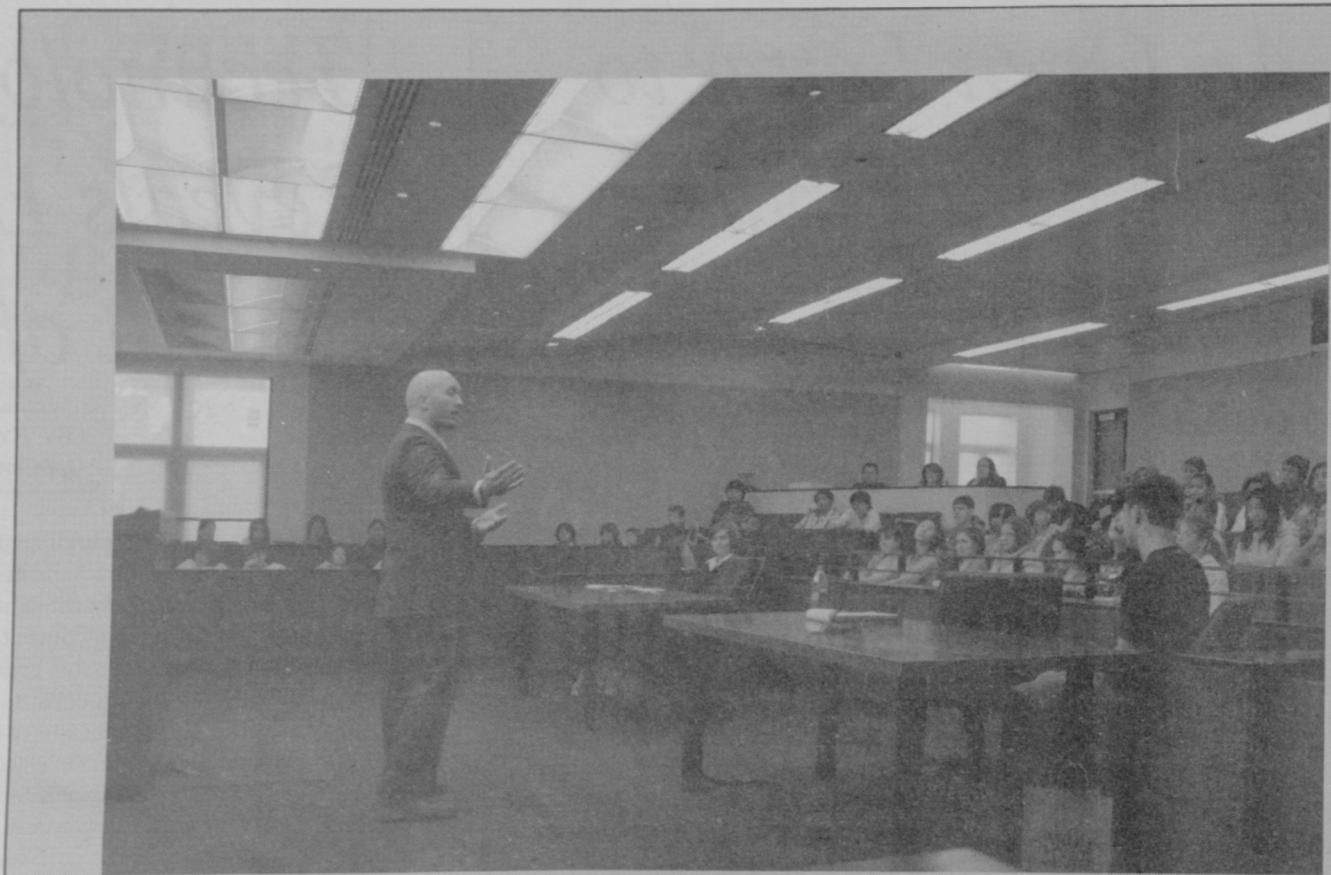


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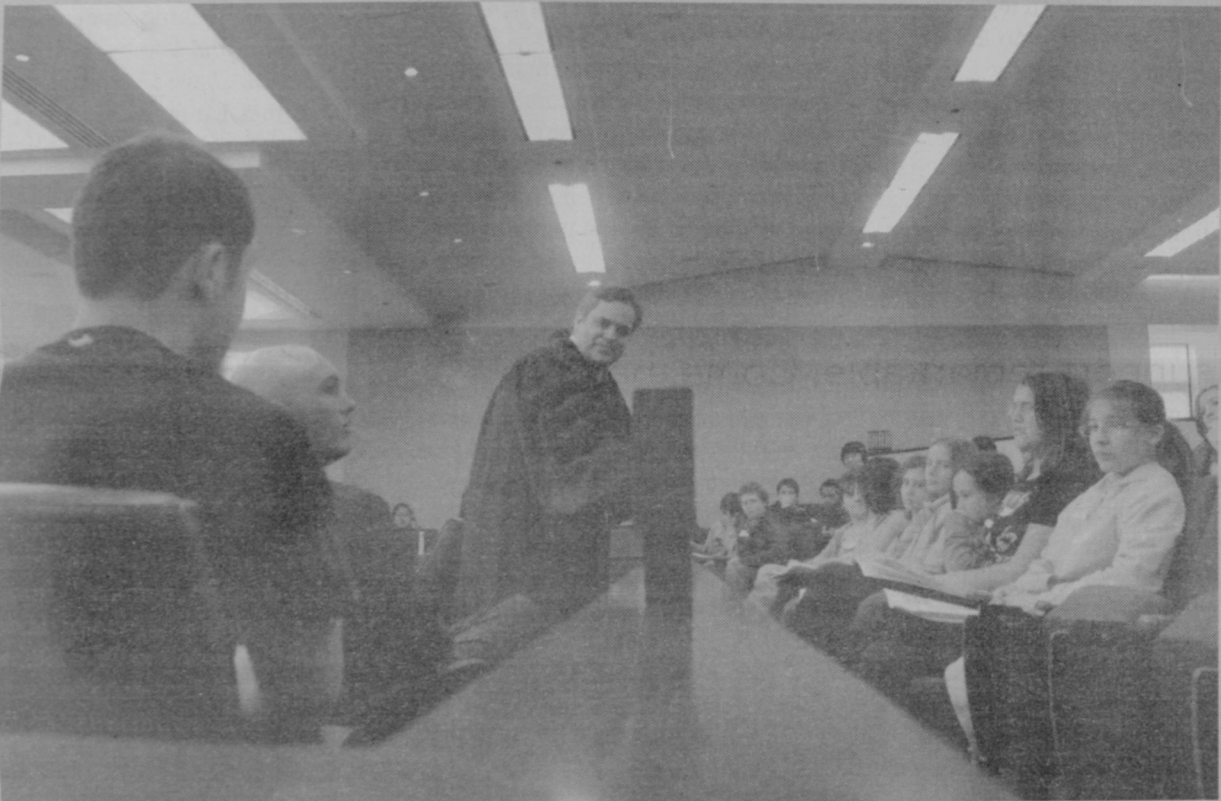


Photo by Claire Duggan

in Midwestern states and industrial and manufacturing hubs, to stick to his campaign rhetoric. Interestingly, Obama did recently recognize the importance of comparative advantage in a speech to an audience in the Midwestern city of Elkhart, Indiana:

But the most important question in whether employers will locate in Elkhart and cities like it and around the country is, what are we doing about education? The quality of the work force is probably what companies are going to pay the most attention to over time. American workers will never be able to compete with the low price of labor in developing countries such as Bangladesh. But an American work force that has high-tech job skills and knowledge can ensure that good-paying jobs remain in this country.

This is the kind of direct and honest talk that should come from those in power. Hopefully Obama's actions will reflect this understanding and he will stand up to the powerful currents demanding that he resurrect Smoot.

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DEA salaries, prisons, etc."

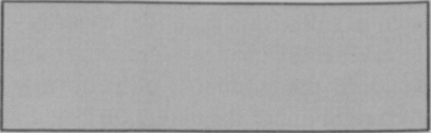
Like Williams and Ansell, many of those who attended the forum found themselves agreeing with Sterling's contentions, making the question and answer period less divisive than it might have been. However, both make clear that Sterling's argument was not about whether or not drugs are a good thing, only about how they should be regulated. As Williams states, "it's not a question of whether drugs are good or bad, it's just about how to regulate them." "Yes," Ansell adds, "it's about what's effective policy for the objectives – which is the health and safety of the public."

According to Ansell, the NLG has long been recognized as one of the nation's most progressive national bar associations. It not only sponsors forums and panels such as the one last Tuesday, the group also helps train and defend protestors, and takes part in national conferences such as the RebLaw conference hosted by Yale University every Spring.

The GW chapter has approximately 50 members, and plays an active role in the national organization's endeavors. For example, Ansell and

other members often attend protests, such as the anti-war protest last September, to observe how police handle the situation and inform protestors of their legal rights. According to Ansell, because "you are supposed to be right there while the arrests are happening," during the anti-war protest he found himself on the front lines, getting tear gassed while "crunched up against the Capital steps."

On March 17, the group will be hosting a panel on the unreliability of forensic evidence, such as fingerprints and DNA, based on a report of the National Academy of Science that was recently delivered to Congress. A member of the committee that wrote the report will be present, along with a member of the Innocence Project. Ansell notes that the group "is always open to new ideas – you can come to us with your own issues, with your own ideas, and we will help you to further them."



FEATURES

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NEWS

GW Law Students Rally Against 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell'

By LIZ WESTBROOK
Staff Writer

Last Friday—Friday the 13th for the second time this year—it was bitterly windy and snow flurries decorated the capital lawn as if it were closer to winter break than spring. The weather however did not deter a hundred or so people—including several GW Lambda Law members—from gathering on the Capital lawn waving signs reading “Freedom to Serve” and “Lesbian Rights” as part of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network (SLDN)’s rally to end Don’t Ask Don’t Tell (DADT).

The rally lasted from 1:00 pm until shortly after 2:00 pm and involved multiple speakers relaying personal stories of how DADT had negatively impacted their lives. The bulk of the speakers were veterans—both gay and straight—who had directly experienced DADT during their time in service. There were also speakers from SLDN, from Mayor Fenty’s office and even DC Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton. Attendees proudly shouted that they hailed from states as far as California and Georgia and as close to home as Virginia.

Washington DC Mayor Adrian Fenty sent a sympathetic envoy in the form of enthusiastic Clarence Fluker from the mayor’s GLBT Affairs Office. Fluker was one of the first speakers and helped set an optimistic tone pledging Fenty’s support in repealing DADT. He went so far as to proclaim March 13th SLDN Day in the District from this point forward.

Fluker was followed by an SLDN rally organizer and a University of Vermont Law School Professor who both battled the deteriorating weather conditions with crowd-involving chants. The

SLDN organizer started a chant that reappeared throughout the rest of the rally: “What do we want?” “Freedom to serve!” “When do we want it?” “Now!”

Vermont Law Professor Jackie Gardina riled up the rally-goers asking, “What does Congress need for a stronger America?” The answer of course: “Lift the ban.”

The audience also chimed in periodically invoking thoughts of a President who has repeatedly announced his opposition to DADT with shouts of “Yes We Can!”

President Obama’s vocal opposition to DADT and his request to Congress to present him with a bill to repeal the policy have manifested in California Democratic Congresswoman Ellen Tauscher’ Military Readiness Enhancement Act. Currently there are some 120 co-sponsors and SLDN is hoping to get more involved. It will take 218 House votes and 60 Senate votes to repeal DADT.

To get the votes needed, before the rally SLDN organized a lobbying day setting up meetings with participants and their Congressional representatives. 2Ls Katie Taylor and Navah Spero represented GW Lambda Law in this lobbying effort.

This was Spero’s first time visiting a Congressional office and she says it was more productive than she expected. She visited eight offices from both sides of the aisle—five of which accommodated face time with a Congressperson or Congressional Aide. Spero says, “As a law student it was really interesting to be a part of this aspect of the [legislative] process. I was lobbying with two former service



Lambda Law co-president Navah Spero.

Photo by Liz Westbrook

members who had been kicked out or asked to resign under DADT and their partners. Their personal stories seemed to affect some of the aides. There’s obviously no way to tell how much effect these types of lobby days really had. There were between seventy-five and one hundred people participating in the lobby day, and if we convinced even

four or five representatives or senators to vote for repeal, then I think it was a great success.”

Taylor echoes Spero’s sentiments finding the day a new and surprisingly successful experience. She says she was moved by being able to participate

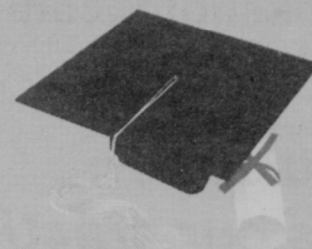
See Rally on Page 8



2L Katie Taylor rallies for gay rights.

Photo by Liz Westbrook

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FEATURE

Law Students Speak Out: Coping With Lay-Offs and Delayed Start Dates

BY KATIE EARNEST
Editor-in-Chief

Back in February, the Law Revue performed a skit in which a young law student lamented, "I just got sucked in. Everyone kept saying it'd help me get a job, it'd look good on my resume, I'd get laid more! But none of that is true! NONE OF IT! Leader, please—tell me what I can do, tell me there is help!" The character was complaining about the misplaced allure of journal membership, but he could have easily been talking about being a lawyer in today's economy.

While some say that the U.S. is poised on the brink of another Great Depression, legal professionals across the country are viewing the current financial state of the industry with dismal expectations. More than 2,149 attorneys have lost their jobs in 2009, according to Lawshucks, a legal blog that keeps track of law firm layoffs with its "Layoff Tracker." Major news outlets such as CNN and The New York Times have also zeroed in on the lawyer's plight, running stories about firm layoffs and alternative career paths for young legal minds.

Practicing attorneys are not the only ones watching the ups and downs of the stock market apprehension. Current law students are realizing their worst fears as their summer jobs and permanent offers fall victim to the free-falling economy. The legal blog Above the Law has been keeping a close eye on the carnage, reporting on each firm's cutting of attorneys in a daily feature called "Layoff Watch." GW students can be seen checking these postings in class, refreshing pages and hunting for their firm's name.

Students have good reason to be worried. In the past few weeks, many 3L day students and 4L evening students have received emails and letters from their firms telling them that their start-dates have been postponed.

While, first-year associates usually begin their tenure in September, firms are quickly doing the math and readjusting their incoming class start dates in order to save money. The duration of time varies, with welcomes being delayed for weeks, months, and in some cases a whole year. According to Above the Law, firms such as Clifford Chance, DLA Piper, and Milbank Tweed have pushed back start-dates to law October, while Morrison & Hartson and Hogan & Hartson have their start-dates in November. First-year associates at O'Melveny & Myers and Latham Watkins are going into work in December, while Nixon Peabody, Chadbourne & Parke and Venable open their doors to newcomers on January 2010. Some firms, such as Cravath, are offering graduates a choice of start-dates, while Pillsbury Winthrop is providing bonus incentives to those first years who are willing to start later than October.

Additionally, graduates who were looking forward to joining Morgan Lewis received notice that the firm was mandating that incoming first year associates defer their start-dates to October 2010. The firm is offering a monthly stipend to those graduates who obtain a year-long job at a

public interest organization. However, the problem remains that, with so many attorneys looking for work, the competition for all jobs is intense and openings may be scarce for graduates looking for work this late in the school year.

Understandably, the students interviewed for this article wished to remain anonymous, as the shaky economy has made them apprehensive about the state of their job offers and interviews.

One 3L whose start date has been pushed back said that, while the extra time could be seen as beneficial for vacation, the reality is not so helpful. "I would like to travel or do something like that, but everything I want to do requires money. I really need the job."

Another 3L working at a New York firm learned about the delay over email. "I received an e-mail from the firm informing me that the firm was offering all new associates new options for our start dates. The new dates were about six to eight weeks later than the start dates we were originally given." The news left him disappointed, but not surprised. "The e-mail came as somewhat of a surprise, but anyone who follows the legal market news could read the writing on the wall. I knew well-known, top-tier firms were changing start dates and firing associates; but, I was hoping my firm would not be one of them."

Although the delay is not major, he said "it tells me that the firm is feeling the pains of the economy's contraction." He is planning to conserve during the extra-long vacation, and beyond. "As a result, I will not be taking as expensive a bar trip as I was originally thought, and I will probably be packing a lunch a couple more times a week. Also, I need to figure out what my living situation will be during those extra 2 months."

First and second year students are also feeling the pinch, as firms shorten their summer internship programs or, in some cases, eliminate them altogether. According to Above the Law, firms across the country such as Cravath, Gibson Dunn, and Kirkland and Ellis, have shortened their twelve week program to just ten weeks. Shearman & Sterling has slashed its program to nine weeks. These moves have been viewed as possible indicators of unstable futures, leading some pending summer associates to fear that they will not receive offers of permanent employment.

A 2L with a pending summer job at a major firm in D.C. recently found out that her summer program was being shortened from twelve to ten weeks. She said, "I definitely don't mind having a longer summer vacation, but it was definitely stressful when we got an email from them saying - we just laid off sixty associates and are in the process of revising the length of our summer program, we'll let you know. About a month later they finally told

us how long the summer program was going to be."

She went on to say that many of her friends have had to work harder to find summer positions. "At least two of my good 2L friends who are on Law Review still don't have summer jobs lined up."

Even candidates for non-paying work are being affected by the state of the legal sector. One 2L who had a government job lined up in Arizona suddenly had his offer rescinded over winter break without explanation. "The economy must be really bad if you can't afford free labor," he joked.

Though his employer did not give a reason for the unexpected move, he still feels it is having a negative effect on his own financial status. "This experience does not necessarily make me nervous, because I was lucky enough to have another job secured. I was going to split my summer between these two nonprofits, so I just told the other office I would like to work the full summer. Plus it means I get to stay in DC this summer and not pay two rents. It does however make me nervous about FRP next fall. If things don't turn around, I won't be able to pay back my student loans minus help from LRAP or other sources. Law school was supposed to open doors and I feel very limited in my options right now."

"I feel a lot of people are nervous about their positions for the summer," he went on to say. "Most of us deal with it laughingly and try to hide our real fear, but it's the 800 pound gorilla in the room."

The Career Development Office (CDO) has responded to the news of delayed start-dates and rescinded offers by trying to assist students who are suddenly scrambling to find jobs. On Friday March 20th, the CDO will be hosting an event "Succeeding in a Difficult Job Market." The program will feature Krista Harris

Cheatham, a former associate at the now-defunct Heller Ehrman and now a senior associate in the Northern Virginia office of Pillsbury Winthrop LLP. In an email to Nota Bene, Cheatham noted that the current state of the economy is just as shocking on the other side of the legal fence.

"We are all saying the same thing: we have never seen it this bad. Natural attrition from law jobs has slowed to a crawl: If you have a job you are motivated like never before to hold on to it. We all know someone, or several people, who are out of work and for whom there appear to be no ready prospects. That's the worst part: the idea that there is no where to go."

Though Cheatham said that things may seem bad, she said, "Those of us who have been out of work have learned that we can survive it. And there are some targeted hires happening. Legal employers will continue to need good people at all levels, including at the entry level. It's just that the opportunities are coming fewer and farther apart. To compensate, it makes sense to expand your network and your job search beyond your current geographic area, beyond your current practice area or area of interest, perhaps even beyond the practice of law. Adaptability is key."

Cheatham had some advice for GW students: "For law students whose start dates have been pushed back and who can afford to, I would definitely consider volunteering to work for a year for a public interest, local government, community, or professional organization. You're making a contribution to others, you're gaining potentially relevant work experience and you're

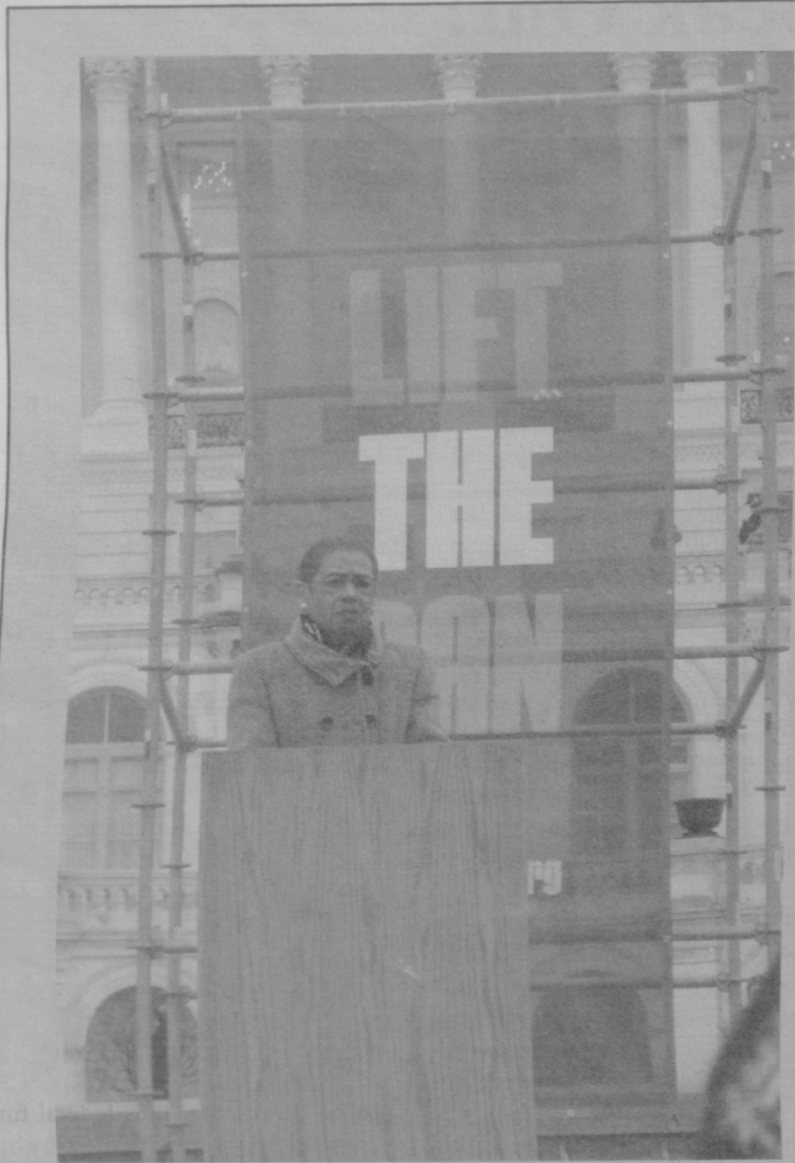
See Coping on Page 8

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NEWS/OPINIONS



Elenor Holmes Norton speaks at the rally. Photo by Liz Westbrook

Rally from page 6.

in the lobbying day alongside men and women who had served the US only to be discharged because of their sexual orientation: "As a gay woman, I've been bothered by DADT, but mostly on an ideological level. I didn't have any personal experience with it. Meeting these veterans really brought home to me the true cost of the policy, both from a national security/military readiness standpoint and from a personal standpoint. I feel really committed to putting forth even more effort to end this policy."

But we at George Washington don't have to look far to find DADT's far reaching effects: Recently the University has found itself lambasted in Don't Ask Don't Tell headlines when it discharged Freshman Navy ROTC member, Todd Belok after being outted by fellow NROTC members. With the policy affecting more and more people it seems inevitable that we will hear more about Tauscher's bill over the next few months.

DC Congressional Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton was one of the final speakers at the rally. She declared pounding the podium that she hoped next year we would be gathered in celebration of DADT's abolition rather than as lobbyists. Norton summed up the feeling of momentum that marked SLDN Day on Capitol Hill shouting "I'm done asking and I'm done telling!" Spero and Taylor cheered through the cold alongside other rally-goers and you couldn't help feeling there was a change in the air.

Coping from page 7.

exposing yourself to other professionals, areas of law, or areas of service that you otherwise might not have gotten to experi-

ence. If you can't afford it, of course, then you do what you have to do, and don't beat yourself up about it. This downturn won't last forever."

Though delayed start-dates and shortened summers could be indications of more rough economic times ahead, most students remain optimistic. The D.C. 2L stated, "Certainly, because the economy is so poor, everyone is nervous that firms might not give out as many offers, or that this uncertainty will make summer associate classes more competitive, and it's hard to say at this point whether those fears are unfounded. I just plan to work hard, have a great summer, and hope for the best!"

Others are less philosophical. "I know of others who have had negative experiences worse than mine," the New York 3L said flatly. "I have friends who have lost their jobs in this economy and I know 3Ls who are still looking for work with only a few months left in the semester. I am just happy to have a job lined up with a good firm. In perspective, it is better to start later than to not start at all."

"I am not any more nervous about the future than I was before I got the e-mail," he continued. "However, it was definitely a reality check."

Survey from page 2.

in-class Internet use. I for one have never been distracted by anyone else's computer. Everyone has paid their money to go here, what they get out of it is entirely up to them. Some will get A's and clerk for the Supreme Court. Some will do alright and find another less prestigious, but otherwise rewarding career. And some will update their Facebook, talk on GChat, and even play World of Warcraft in class.

If people don't want to pay attention in class, removing computers isn't going to change their minds. Students will simply revert to more archaic forms of distraction: talking, doodling on their notebooks, and sleeping. Additionally, the Internet is a useful tool, even in class, for furthering our education. How many times have we looked up a case that we didn't understand (or read) on Wikipedia in order to comprehend what our professor was discussing, Googled some obscure product that was the subject of a dispute in contracts (even if only to find where Dean Maggs gets his pictures), or used the Internet to figure out some non-legal concept that was essential to the understanding of a case? I have done all these things, and I know that I am not alone.

To me, the backlash against computers in school is just another sign of the law school's failure to grasp the importance of technology. Although steps have been taken to remedy our wireless network, it remains pathetic at best, and useless much of the time. Over spring break I was working in the library at my fiancée's school, tiny Robert Morris University, and was blown away by how much faster her school's wireless Internet was than our own (and she does not pay \$40,000 a year to go there!). Meanwhile, back in the hard lounge, my iTunes update downloads at a "blistering" 18 kbps (for the less tech-savvy of you, the original dial-up ran at 26 kbps, and cable broadband runs around 3 mbps or more, which is over 100 times faster). To test just how bad our wireless is, on a day when it seemed particularly slow, I hit the "email" button on the portal on my computer in the hard lounge, then walked upstairs to the email stations outside the copy center and opened my email there. I logged off and headed back downstairs to find that in all that time the same email page had still not yet fully loaded off the wireless network.

My frustration with the wireless service in our school isn't just because it takes 45 minutes to view Facebook pics from last weekend, or the terrifying/depressing probability that I won't be able to watch March Madness online until I go home. It's also because it takes forever to download the PDF my professor uploaded to the portal, because I have to allot extra time to an assignment because I have to account for the outrageous time it takes to open cases on Lexis or Westlaw, and because I have to add "worrying about getting dropped from the network during an exam" to all the other anxiety that I'm faced with during that time.

Technology is the driving force behind all things in our world today. The legal field is no exception. Having the best technology possible is essential, not only towards making this school a better learning environment, but also to make GW competitive among other law schools. Honestly, if any of you were faced with the choice of attending GW knowing that laptops were not allowed in class, and that our Internet was about as efficient as your 1994 AOL account, would you have still come here if you could have gone to a school that embraced the role of technology in the classroom instead? I can't say that I would have, and if I had known how important my computer would be to my legal education thus far, I almost certainly would not have.

Professors may view our computers as a nuisance, and their use in class

as distracting or even disrespectful, and I can understand that. Regardless of their personal feelings on the matter, however, computers are absolutely essential to legal education, and their importance will only increase with time. Our faculty must accept them as a necessary evil, and our school must make technology a top priority, or risk adversely impacting not only current students, but also the Law School as an institution for years to come.

Obama from page 2.

Executive Order to close the Guantanamo Bay prison facility itself, and even has refused to use the term "enemy combatant" for the individuals detained in the War on Terror (despite the fact that it is a Congressionally-defined term) but has signaled that military commissions will continue.

Last week, the President ordered that all agencies consult counsel prior to relying on any of President Bush's signing statements, implying a constitutional deficiency in the practice. The same day, he issued a signing statement of his own. This could be seen as a petty criticism, along the lines of those who hound the President for his total reliance on teleprompters, or who claim that his image machine is partly responsible for outright censorship of criticism in some fora, such as Wikipedia's scrubbing Obama's page of any edit that questions his eligibility to serve as President. But there is a subtle sense gathering momentum that being tied to this administration will somehow become radioactive in the same way it was for those close to President Bush. Nominees/designees keep removing themselves from consideration for some very high-level posts, and while there certainly can be legitimate reasons for individuals to do so, one may question at what point the mass exodus becomes suspicious.

But what has really begun to draw ire from across the board is yet another similarity this President has with President Bush – his ready employment of the politics of fear. President Bush was accused by many of fear-mongering with respect to the threat of terrorism (a threat that, thankfully, President Obama appears to recognize is very real and continuing); some have started accusing President Obama with similar tactics as to the economy, which can arguably be considered a worse abuse of the bully pulpit as so much of our economic health relies on the psycho-social dimensions of consumer confidence.

What is further discouraging is that President Obama is somewhat passing the buck on the economy. It is not that he is failing to act – certainly he is addressing the problems in the way he believes needs to be done. But he constantly reminds people that the problems were there before. Notably, when the New York Times last week asked him some of the most probing questions he has received thus far about his economic proposals, he pointed out that – the economic fallout we are now experiencing did not begin "on [his] watch." Somebody needs to explain to him that, while he is certainly correct about that, the election is over, and we don't care. Reagan's words ("are you better off. . ."), and Clinton's ("it's the economy . . .") will come alive again

OPINIONS

NOTA BENE

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NOTA BENE IS A BI-WEEKLY STUDENT PUBLICATION AT THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY LAW SCHOOL. NOTA BENE SERVES AS A FORUM FOR NEWS, FEATURES & OPINIONS IN THE LAW SCHOOL COMMUNITY. WE SEEK SUBMISSIONS FROM STUDENTS AT GW LAW SCHOOL.

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Obama from page 8.

in three years. Even Bush I ("read my lips . . .") will be revived if/when 95% of "working families" do not see their taxes decrease.

And this entire mess has certainly hit very close to home for many GW students this year. Despite the school last week very proudly touted that we rank #6 in the country for graduates going to BigLaw, we all know classmates, whether graduating 3Ls, or even 2Ls or 1Ls who (theoretically) are more likely to work for free, who are still jobless either for the summer, or for next year. As if the stresses of finals are not going to be enough in themselves next month, for those who are still clamoring for work, the nearing end of the semester is not much a cause to celebrate.

It is easy for us to get caught-up in what appears to be our pre-determined career path, to apply left and right to firms, big, medium, or small. But of course, they're all downsizing, and the excess flood of lawyers in the market make for much more difficult competition for clerkships and government attorney positions, neither of which are really a far stone's throw from the firm-track. But when it comes down to it, we all know that probably half of us had no real intent of practicing law for the rest of our lives when we came to law school; I suspect that many of us now feel the same way, as would many more but for our fear of bleak market outlooks, combined with lawyers' tendencies to be risk-averse to begin with.

But in many ways, the depletion of the firm market is presents new opportunities to pursue passions other than law. Although, in any other year, taking a non-law job right out of law school would be looked upon as suspect if ever a J.D. were to start looking at firm jobs later on in his career, it is no secret that nobody is hiring lawyers to be lawyers right now. It is, in the end, a great excuse to explore other non-traditional career paths that do not revolve the billable hour, without suffering from doing so down the road. If you have a passion for politics or law enforcement, or foreign service or community outreach, you are now free to look at those fields in

ways that otherwise probably would be less attractive (and less strategic in terms of career planning) in other years.

There is no doubt, indeed quickly cliché, that we are living in tough times. But as President Obama has (largely correctly) seen opportunities forged from crisis, so should we. No matter how successful the administration will be in its policy initiatives, as individuals, seeking to make our way in the world, we are still on our own, subject to our own initiative as a determinant of success, now more than ever. And that itself can be quite an encouraging thought.

Confuse from page 2.

Circuit environmental law decisions, decided to directly confront the Bush EPA with an order to comply with the Clean Air Act.

In stark contrast, in the last two months the Obama administration has reversed course on almost all front-pushing for climate change legislation, changing the EPA's position with respect to California's stricter limits, revisiting mercury regulation, funding science and disallowing oil exploration on vast stretches of public land.

Obama has reshaped environmental policy in two important ways. First, he has taken a philosophical step in the direction of responsibility, calling for an environmental policy that reflects our obligations to future generations and to the world. The new administration also views environmentalism as an economic opportunity; within minutes of being sworn in, Obama openly rejected the prior philosophy that environmental protection and economic prosperity are at odds.

The second way that Obama has reshaped environmental policy is more troubling. He has switched the Bush philosophy of "energy versus environment" into "energy and environment," or more simply, "green energy." The clearest manifestation of this policy is the inclusion of his environmental agenda into the energy prong of his save-America trifecta of "Energy, Education and Healthcare." The approach

is likely to bring the greatest wave of environmental legislation since the 1970's, but it is troubling because it is simply the flip side of the Bush philosophy that energy and environment are inextricably linked.

What's the danger? For one, if the policy fails or even falls short, the old argument that environment must give way for energy will gain new force. Because humans are selfish and short-sided, this could at worst cause a backlash that sets environmental protection back decades.

Even under a more optimistic scenario, another risk to the policy is that non-energy environmental issues like species protection and clean water initiatives will fall far behind energy-related issues, such as climate and drilling, on the priority list. There are already signs of this. The newly created Energy Czar post, occupied by former EPA Administrator Carol Browner, threatens to take authority and influence away from the White House's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), heretofore entrusted as the chief advisor to the President on environmental issues. With Obama's environmental planning tied up with his energy policy, it appears likely that Browner will have the first word on climate, so CEQ and other agencies will have to wait in line to push other environmental concerns.

The legal environmental movement that was born in the 1970's has always been thwarted by different forces, not least the energy lobby, but at least it was a unified front. By merging energy and environment Obama risks obscuring goals in both areas. Success on the energy front will be seen as success on the environmental front, removing an important impetus to address problems ranging from contaminated waste sites to polluted lakes to depleted fish stocks.

Energy and the environment are interrelated and interdependent- but they are distinct. Environmental policy has long been a force against the destructive nature of humanity, while energy has been at the heart of our consumptive, destructive capacity. One feeds on human excess, one suffers from it. Obama's approach may well prove to take us to a new level of environmental stewardship, but it's a gamble. Sometimes it's better to let rivals be rivals.

Open from page 2.

to be addressed. This federal funding provides an incentive to destroy human embryos, and I did not hear you specify any limits as to the sources from where these cells could be obtained. Do you support funding research on embryos that were created and destroyed solely for the purposes of research? Or is this limited to those embryos that are to be discarded at fertility clinics? Are any such limits indicative of an anti-scientific attitude?

At the 2008 Democratic Compassion Forum you stated that you "don't presume to know the answer" to the question of when life begins. You also stated that "potential life" has a "moral weight" that we ought to take into consideration. How much weight have you assigned to the embryo in making this decision? How did you determine that pursuing this research is worth the moral cost? Do we err on the side of death for the embryos when there is a potential benefit for others? How large must the benefit be? How is it that the "proper course has become clear," when you have claimed in the not-distant past to be so uncertain about the value of human life in its earliest stages? At what point of human development would you find that the potential benefits of research are outweighed by the developing human life? Opponents of this research do not expect you to suddenly agree with us upon considering these important questions. But we do expect open discussion and mature debate about the serious ethical issues involved.

Respectfully,
Patrick DeKlotz

FEATURES

A Rosé By Any Other Name

By JOON SONG
Columnist

Like describing love, describing wine is a notoriously inexact art and science. Many, especially wine snobs or those in the wine industry, are prone to coming up with terms that go from logical—such as “citrus” or “cherry”—and imaginative—“damp earth,” “boysenberry jam,” “slate”—to circumspect—“barnyard,” “petrol,” “rubber”—and downright fanciful—“cat pee” or “autumnal” (that last being one of my favorite adjectives for certain shimmering, honeyed rieslings).

There has been some backlash against the use of at least the more out-there descriptors. This has also been tied to some extent to the criticism of the 100-point scale as popularized by that kingmaker of winemakers, Robert Parker.

For instance, there are those people who say that the descriptors are simply a way for the wine industry to create a mystique around its product. And come on, how does “cat pee” describe sauvignon blanc (positively), much less any wine?

Perhaps a more persuasive argument can be raised against the 100-point scale. There may certainly be a difference between an 86-point wine and a 96-point wine, but is there any real difference between a 90-point wine and a 91-point wine? It is common knowledge that wine critics generally cannot replicate their scores from one day to another. They’re human: so what? If I were assigning wines scores from 50-100 for my personal edification that’d be one thing; however, it is an oft-observed phenomenon that wines that get high scores from Parker et al. get hugely popular and the lucky winemakers therefore get to charge higher and higher prices.

The winemakers that don’t get the high scores? They struggle.

Yet another problem with purportedly objective scales is that they’re not. They’re inevitably subjective. Robert Parker is a well-known fan of big, bold wines, leading to what has been called the “Parkerization” of wines: the development of an “International Style” of wine that is uniformly big, bold, and high-alcohol regardless of the varietal and appellation. Think of a Chilean cabernet that tastes like a California cabernet, or a California pinot noir that tastes like a California cabernet.

But it would be unwise to rail against Robert Parker (he’s a fellow lawyer, after all). Many wine consumers rely on Parker’s scores and those of other wine critics to pick up a bottle for the evening. And there’s nothing wrong

with this. I’d bet money that a wine ranked 92 points by someone is good, or at least decent.

The optimal route is to start drinking a lot of wine—not only to get drunk, mind you, but to drink wine and really focus on its different elements and what makes it good for you.

Don’t be afraid to ask the associates at a wine shop for help. The New York Times had an interesting article a while back about gender-based differences in shopping for wine. Women were more prone to asking for suggestions from wine proprietors, whereas men were much more likely simply to look at the wine scores and price.

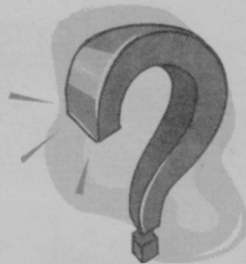
This is where the descriptors come in. For an example of descriptors done right, check out one of Kermit Lynch’s wine mailers, available on his website at www.kermitlynch.com. He manages to avoid sounding pretentious and conveys instead a joy and wonderment about the wines he imports. Reading an entry on one of his wines is to be transported to Provence, waiting for a meal of roast lamb or grilled fish brushed with olive oil and herbs. I definitely feel like I know more about his wines before drinking them than any wine I just know the score of.

Wine is an inherently social experience—or should be—and part of the fun is discussing the merits (or demerits) of the wine as it is being drunk with your friends. It’s great to be ridiculous. My current roommate described the 2001 L’Esprit du Silene, one of my favorite wines, as a “thornbush”: rough, wild, with deep persistent roots and brambles spreading everywhere.

Going back to “autumnal”: I used this word to describe the 2005 Ch. W. Bernhard Hackenheimer Kirchberg Scheurebe Spätlese (no way in heck I’m pronouncing that name) riesling, and to me it fit perfectly. Peaches, nectar—a gorgeous honeyed texture caressing the mouth like waves of silk. Autumnal, evocative of the first golden falling leaves and the cold.

Obviously, more common adjectives will do nicely. You will probably encounter “cherry,” “plum,” “prune,” “dark” and “tannic” very regularly when imbibing red wines. “Citrus,” “grassy,” “bright,” and “fresh” are often used for white wines.

Regardless of what you might think of descriptors, they are there for a reason. With a little bit of “practice,” you will rely less on simple scores or price and be able to create your own, truer tastes and preferences and what’s more—communicate them to others.



Ask Yunji!

By YUNJI KIM
Columnist

Dear Yunji,
I have a problem. I don’t think I can take being in school anymore: the classes are boring but difficult, and I’m tired of being tired. What should I do?

Exhausted in the Stacks

Dear Stacks,

I completely empathize with your plight. There have been times when I too have felt tired and wretched - so much that even the miraculous appearance of free food in the hard lounge couldn’t cheer me up. It sounds like you need a new spin on your perspective. Stop viewing your studies as a means unto themselves, but as stepping stones towards your own personal versions of success and happiness. Viewing your classes as the training tools for your future has a much more invigorating effect than viewing them as academic obligations.

To explain, let me show you how I label the classes that I am taking or am planning to in the future:

Corporations: How to establish your own empire.

Criminal Procedure: Learning the lingo of Law and Order.

Torts: How to get rich by carrying around a bag of banana peels.

Negotiations a.k.a. “Making an offer you can’t refuse”: How to become an effective consiglieri.

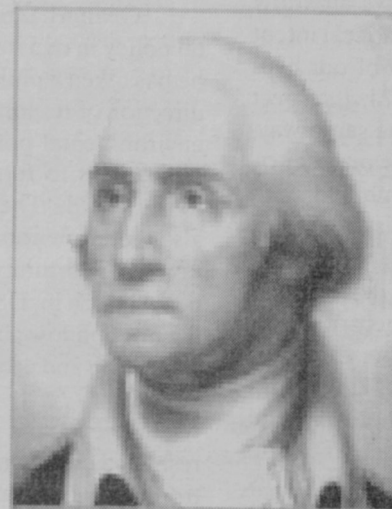
Legal Drafting: Time to ogle “that” person (who is he or she in your class?).

It is silly. But silly is what holds so many of us together until our next caffeine break. So, dear Stacks, to answer your query in short: stop frowning, and just start ogling.

Sincerely,
Yunji

Got a question about what’s going around the law school, Foggy Bottom, or the world in general? Email notabenegw@gmail.com and ask what’s on your mind. Yunji has the answer!

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FEATURES

Bar Brief: Best of D.C. Happy Hours

BY SET SAMII AND LISA STRAUSS
Columnists



Trust Us, We're Experts

It's 5:01PM, do you know where to go for happy hour? Luckily you have us, your trusty bar reviewers, to give you a list of our favorite happy hour deals in the District. Here they are in no particular order...

Nooshi (1120 19th Street, NW): If you're a GW Law student and haven't been to Nooshi Crazy Hours yet, then there is definitely something wrong with you. Located just a hop, skip, and a jump away from the law school, Nooshi's Crazy Hours is the perfect way to unwind after a full day of trying to pass off G-chatting as impassioned note-taking. With all drinks discounted 50% from 4-7PM, you can have twice the fun for half the price. We suggest the frozen mango margarita (with salt of course!) alongside a couple of rolls of sushi or any one of Nooshi's delicious noodle dishes. Service during happy hour is shoddy at best, but after a few drinks we promise you won't even notice!

Chef Geoff's (1301 Pennsylvania Ave, NW): At Chef Geoff's downtown happy hour, everyone leaves a winner! Offering \$6 gourmet burgers, \$9 pizza pies, \$3 long necks, and best of all, \$8 Supermugs of ice-cold drafts, you will leave with your wallet still full (well as full as possible for a law student) and your belly even fuller! The Supermugs are giant beer-filled steins and you will surely be feeling happy after just one round. We suggest Leinenkugel's Sunset Wheat, for a flavorful complement to either a burger or pizza. But this place definitely gets crowded, as Hill staffers drop in by the dozens, so get here early to stake out a few seats by the bar. The special also carries over all-day on Saturday and Sunday, so all you avid day drinkers can reap the benefits of CG's downtown happy hour as well!

Gazuza (1629 Connecticut Ave, NW): Want something a little more swanky and hip? Then head over to Dupont's Gazuza lounge for happy hour in high style. Known for its sushi and hookah, Gazuza is the ideal place for a chill post-work evening. Drink specials include \$6 mojitos and apple martinis, \$5 rail drinks, and \$4 beers along with

\$4 rolls of assorted sushi. Come with a few friends, order a few drinks and sushi rolls, pick out your favorite hookah flavor, and relax to low-tempo lounge music. The partial open-air space makes Gazuza lounge a unique bar and we are sure it will become one your favorite happy hour spots in DC.

51st State Tavern (2512 L Street, NW): A long-time GW hangout, 51st State offers some of the best happy hour deals in town. \$2.50 drafts and \$3.00 rail drinks means you can pull a Daddy Warbucks and buy a round for your friends without breaking the bank. In the springtime, come early to secure a table on the Tavern's outdoor patio and enjoy happy hour amongst a mix of students and young professionals. For those of you looking for a cheap pig-out spot, come to 51st for 50-cent taco night on Mondays and 10-cent wing night on Tuesdays. Warning: you may hate yourself for this in the morning.

Vinoteca Wine Bar (1940 11th Street, NW): Care to venture off the beaten path? Head over to Vinoteca Wine Bar in the U Street corridor for one of DC's best wine-centric happy hours. A selection of nearly 20 reds and whites by the glass make this the perfect happy hour for those of you wanting a little culture in your lives. In addition to the wine, Vinoteca has several food specials including your choice of any two gourmet sliders for just \$7. For you adventurous folk, we suggest the bison burger topped with gruyere and caramelized onions or the venison burger topped with brie and poblano peppers. The space was a little small, but well appointed, while the single bartender was a bit snappy at times and did not offer any advice for those indecisive about which wines to try. Keep your group size to a minimum though as the special is only valid at the tiny bar near the entrance.

Do you have suggestions, comments, concerns or just need a bar recommendation? Did you want to send us your outlines? Email us at gwbarbrief@gmail.com.

TERENCE G. SCHOONE-JONGEN

De Novo Days *Bastardized Metaphors:* *Inertia*

I returned home from Spring Break this year to discover that my bike had essentially been stripped by thieves. Well, that isn't entirely true. It happened in two stages, and the first stage was probably the work of drunks rather than thieves. This first stage took place several weeks ago, and was simply a matter of someone removing the seat. He or she probably heaved it into the bushes somewhere and had a good laugh as he or she staggered onward into the night. I was planning on going up to the bike store and getting it replaced upon the advent of consistently warm weather. Anyway, this past week, as I was walking back up to my building, suitcase in hand, I couldn't help but notice that someone had absconded with my back wheel. In the process of obtaining said back wheel, this individual had, out of malice or necessity, also bent the back half of the frame. So now, when leaving my building each morning and returning each evening, I get to see the sad sight of my decrepit ride. I should just unchain it and let someone steal the rest of it—the bike itself isn't worth the money it will take to restore it to functionality. And so bike-shopping time is now upon me.

As you may know, I am a person whose thought processes operate through attenuated association. Accordingly, you may not be entirely surprised to hear that the twisted wreck of my bike got me to thinking about inertia. I've had a few mishaps on that bike. You may recall my tale of getting hit by a truck last semester, for example. Well, time was, before law school, I was a teacher of sorts in Ohio. The place I was teaching was some 11 miles from my apartment (central Ohio is a land of godless sprawl), and because I like to do incomprehensible things, I would bike to work each day. After my last day of work, I had just commenced the ride home, which involves going down a steep-ish hill before hanging a hard left onto the bike trail. Feeling ambitious, invincible, and free, I flew down that hill faster than what I was accustomed to. The result was predictable: I didn't quite make that hard right and instead smashed into a metal railing. A passing truckload of hick landscapers whooped in delight

and honked their horn; I thought about giving them a splendid gesture, but I was too busy inspecting my wound. If you'd ever like to see the resultant shin scar, just ask. The ensuing 11 mile bike ride was one of the more exhilarating of my life, owing to the absurd levels of adrenaline released by the collision. I accidentally swallowed a fly, though, which blunted the overall experience somewhat.

A delightful story, to be sure, and one that would not have been possible without inertia. Had the bodies in motion not tended to stay in motion, I probably could have avoided the collision. As it was, the guard rail served to subject my constant velocity to a net external force. And I came to rest.

Physical inertia, of course, isn't the only kind of inertia that is out there. Returning from Spring Break, ruined bike or not, has decidedly been a study in attempting to overcome ambivalent inertia (I wonder if that's a neologism. I'll take credit if it is). I find that a week of laying on the beach and drinking cheap piña coladas has sapped my will to do much of anything else. I'm not proud; just honest. My guess is that you know whereof I speak. It is hard getting back in the game after taking a break. But we don't really have any choice but to overcome our desire to remain at rest. There's stuff to do.

There is a flip side, however. We will probably all get moving again pretty soon here, if we haven't already done so, because we will be forced to get moving. A more pressing problem: will you be able to slow down once you're hurtling down the hill of the second semester home stretch? Granted, it is easy to procrastinate. But it is also easy to let yourself get unnecessarily bogged down and stressed out. And then all the questionable coping mechanisms and bad impulses burst forth in all their glory. Hilarity ensues, regret follows, and before you know it you're peeling your battered, scarred self off of the guard rail and eating flies.

And thus, my advice: find some net external forces to (1) get your off of your ass, but (2) help you stave off the impending freak out/break down that late March and April otherwise hold. Hint: "external" means "not law school."

Spill from page 1.

Dean Morrison said that no operations of the law school were affected because the incident occurred late at night. Additionally, the spill was minor and most of the fuel was contained by an overflow tank or spilled outside of the building, with a small amount leaking into the Lisner basement. He also noted the fuel was contained during the incident, as there was "not a lot inside the building and what was spilled outside was not great."

Dean Morrison said that the clean-up crew finished their work and all of the affected buildings were re-opened by 5:00am on Sunday. The law school remains open, though some students have commented on the lingering

smell of fuel in the basement study rooms in Stuart Hall.

The incident remains under investigation.

FYC from page 1.

"they never know for sure whether they will enjoy it until they give it a try. One of the great things about Moot Court Board, however, is that if students change their minds later, they still have the option to participate in one of the many upper-level competitions hosted here at GW every year."

THE BACK PAGE

ON THE DOCKET

law school events

Wednesday March 18

Pizza and Passing the NY Bar!

BAR/BRI and Active Minds invite you to learn about course locations, exam filing deadlines, preview programs, and more! Open to all students! Pizza will be provided!
12:00-1:00PM, L301

Recession Proofing Your Career, How to Succeed in an Economic Downturn

Come hear Mary Crane, a marketing and management consultant share her insights about how to succeed in your summer position and how to recession proof your career.
5:00PM - 6:00PM, B505

Cyberlaw Spring Career Panel

Interested in a career in cyberlaw? Ask our panel about practicing and breaking into internet, computer and IP law.
5:00PM, Tasher Great Room

Same-Sex Marriage Panel

Lambda is hosting a Same-Sex Marriage Panel. We will have food and drinks sponsored by Kirkland & Ellis, LLP.
7:00PM, B505

Friday March 20

Barrister's Ball

Buy your tickets at www.gwsba.com

Monday March 23

The Global Law Workshop Series presents Professor Mark Tushnet, Harvard Law School speaking on "The Inevitable Globalization of Constitutional Law."
3:50PM - 5:50PM, E312

Saturday March 28

First Year Moot Court Competition

Horoscopes

ARIES (MARCH 21—APRIL 19)

Fate called - you're screwed.

TAURUS (APRIL 20—MAY 20)

You say 'potato,' I say 'food of the next Depression.'

GEMINI (MAY 21—JUNE 21)

Your love life is about as hot as a bag of jalapeno potato chips. Yowza!

CANCER (JUNE 22—JULY 22)

Get wasted at Barrister's Ball - because every kid needs a good how-mommy-met-daddy story.

LEO (JULY 23—AUG. 22)

Law school is a small pond with a bunch of goldfish and one smelly catfish. Guess which one you are.

VIRGO (AUG. 23—SEPT. 22)

Stop putting your feet on the couches in the soft lounge. It grosses people out.

LIBRA (SEPT. 23—OCT. 23)

Yes, days after St. Patrick's Day, you still smell like Guinness.

SCORPIO (OCT. 24—NOV. 21)

Avoid shiny objects.

SAGITTARIUS (NOV. 22—DEC. 21)

Did you inhale fumes from the Lisner fuel oil spill, or are you really that stupid?

CAPRICORN (DEC. 22—JAN. 19)

I hear Froggy Bottom is auditioning bar wenches on Friday. You should look into that.

AQUARIUS (JAN. 20—FEB. 18)

You know that the microphones pick up your snarky comments when classes are recorded, right?

PISCES (FEB. 19—MARCH 20)

Free raisins for you in the conference room.

Tuesday April 7

Dean's Jeans Day

Student BBQ given by the Law School Deans.
4:00PM - 6:30PM, University Quad (Yard)

Tuesday April 7

"Global Legal Orders Collide: The Role of Courts in the Global Arena" by Professor Sabino Cassese

The Global Law Workshop Series presents Professor Sabino Cassese, University of Rome speaking on "When Global Legal Orders Collide: The Role of Courts in the Global Arena." Paper available with Frances Arias, farias@law.gwu.edu
3:50PM - 5:50PM, E312

